

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

PCT

To:

Rashid, P  ter J.
RADER, FISHMAN & GRAUER PLLC
39533 Woodward Avenue
Suite 140
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304
ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE

NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF
THE INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Rule 71.1)

Date of mailing (day/month/year)	14.06.2004
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Applicant's or agent's file reference 65961-0079	IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION
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International application No. PCT/US 03/04135	International filing date (day/month/year) 11.02.2003	Priority date (day/month/year) 19.02.2002
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Applicant
INTIER AUTOMOTIVE INC. et al.

1. The applicant is hereby notified that this International Preliminary Examining Authority transmits herewith the international preliminary examination report and its annexes, if any, established on the international application.
2. A copy of the report and its annexes, if any, is being transmitted to the International Bureau for communication to all the elected Offices.
3. Where required by any of the elected Offices, the International Bureau will prepare an English translation of the report (but not of any annexes) and will transmit such translation to those Offices.

4. REMINDER

The applicant must enter the national phase before each elected Office by performing certain acts (filing translations and paying national fees) within 30 months from the priority date (or later in some Offices) (Article 39(1)) (see also the reminder sent by the International Bureau with Form PCT/IB/301).

Where a translation of the international application must be furnished to an elected Office, that translation must contain a translation of any annexes to the international preliminary examination report. It is the applicant's responsibility to prepare and furnish such translation directly to each elected Office concerned.

For further details on the applicable time limits and requirements of the elected Offices, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

The applicant's attention is drawn to Article 33(5), which provides that the criteria of novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability described in Article 33(2) to (4) merely serve the purposes of international preliminary examination and that "any Contracting State may apply additional or different criteria for the purposes of deciding whether, in that State, the claimed inventions is patentable or not" (see also Article 27(5)). Such additional criteria may relate, for example, to exemptions from patentability, requirements for enabling disclosure, clarity and support for the claims.

Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:



European Patent Office
D-80298 Munich
Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d
Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465

Authorized Officer



Hacker, S
Tel. +45 89 2359-7296



PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 65961-0079		FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/PEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/US 03/04135	International filing date (day/month/year) 11.02.2003	Priority date (day/month/year) 19.02.2002	
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC B60R13/02, B60R13/02			
Applicant INTIER AUTOMOTIVE INC. et al.			
<p>1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 38.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 6 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).</p> <p>These annexes consist of a total of 2 sheets.</p>			
<p>3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <p>I <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basis of the opinion</p> <p>II <input type="checkbox"/> Priority</p> <p>III <input type="checkbox"/> Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</p> <p>IV <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of unity of invention</p> <p>V <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</p> <p>VI <input type="checkbox"/> Certain documents cited</p> <p>VII <input type="checkbox"/> Certain defects in the international application</p> <p>VIII <input type="checkbox"/> Certain observations on the international application</p>			
Date of submission of the demand 16.09.2003		Date of completion of this report 14.06.2004	
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465		Authorized Officer Yildirim, I Telephone No. +49 89 2399-7216 	

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. **PCT/US 03/04135**

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

Description, Pages

1-4 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-10 filed with telefax on 28.04.2004

Drawings, Sheets

1/3-3/3 as originally filed

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide ~~and/or~~ amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:
- ☐ the claims, Nos.:
- ☐ the drawings, sheets:

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. **PCT/US 03/04135**

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-3,5,7,8
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	4,9
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-5,7-9
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/US 03/04135

Re Item V

Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Prior Art

Reference is made to the following documents:

D1: GB-A-2 345 301 (PRINCE CORP) 5 July 2000 (2000-07-05)

2. Independent Claim 1

D1 discloses (the references in parentheses applying to this document):

"a headliner, comprising:

a substrate (70) including a first surface, and opposite, second surface substantially parallel to said first surface forming a thickness of said substrate therebetween, said first surface having a plurality of impressions (72) formed therein along a plane of said first surface so as to create a corresponding number of projections (74) extending outwardly from said second surface ("indentation", "jutting out", "forward extension" don't imply a shape); and

a layer of material (60) attached to said projections (74) of said substrate (70), wherein said layer of material together with said projections form an I-beam structure that enhances the strength of said headliner (see figures 7 and 8)."

The subject-matter of claim 1 is therefore not new (Article 33(2) PCT).

3. Dependent claims 2 to 5

Dependent claims 2 to 5 do not appear to contain any additional features which, in combination with the features of claim 1 to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty or inventive step. These claims appear to suggest only slight changes in the system of claim 1 which, having regard to the prior art (see D1), come within the scope of the customary practice followed by persons skilled in the art; especially as the advantages thus achieved can be readily contemplated in advance. Consequently, the subject matters of claims 2 to 5 appear to lack novelty or at least an inventive step.

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/US 03/04135

4. Dependent claims 6 and 10

The amended claims 6 and 10 introduce subject-matter which extends beyond the content of the application as filed, contrary to Article 34(2)(b) PCT.

5. Independent claim 7

The same reasoning applies, mutatis mutandis, to the subject-matter of the independent claim 7, which therefore is also not new.

6. Dependent claims 8 and 9

Dependent claims 8 and 9 do not appear to contain any additional features which, in combination with the features of claim 7 to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty or inventive step. These claims appear to suggest only slight changes in the system of claim 1 which, having regard to the prior art (see D1), come within the scope of the customary practice followed by persons skilled in the art, especially as the advantages thus achieved can be readily contemplated in advance. Consequently, the subject matters of claims 8 and 9 appear to lack novelty or at least an inventive step.

7. Conclusions

Independent claims 1 and 7 are not in the two-part form in accordance with Rule 6.3(b) PCT, which in the present case would be appropriate, with those features known in combination from the prior art being placed in the preamble (Rule 6.3(b)(I) PCT) and with the remaining features being included in the characterising part (Rule 6.3(b)(ii) PCT).

Contrary to the requirements of Rule 5.1(a)(ii) PCT, the relevant background art disclosed in D1 is not mentioned in the description, nor is this document identified therein.

The reference signs of the features "first surface (11) having...impressions" and "projections extending...from...second surface (13)" do not comply with the signs in figures 1 to 3.

According to the requirements of Rule 10.2 PCT, the terminology and the signs shall be

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/US 03/04135

consistent throughout the application. This requirement is not met in view of the use of the expressions "first/second surface" and "front/back side".

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A headliner, comprising:

a substrate (10) including a first surface (11), and an opposite, second surface (13) substantially parallel to said first surface (11) forming a thickness of said substrate (10) therebetween, said first surface (11) having a plurality of impressions (12) formed therein along a plane of said first surface (11) so as to create a corresponding number of projections (14) extending outwardly from said second surface (13) substantially perpendicular to said plane of said first surface (11); and

a layer of material (16) attached to said projections (14) of said substrate,

wherein said layer of material (16) together with said projections (14) form an I-beam structure that enhances the strength of said headliner.
2. The headliner according to Claim 1, wherein said substrate (10) and said layer of material (16) are comprised of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) material.
3. The headliner according to Claim 1, wherein said substrate (10) and said layer of material (16) are comprised of 100% recyclable material.
4. The headliner according to Claim 1, wherein said impressions (12) and corresponding projections (14) are arranged so as to have a maximum number per unit area of substrate (10).
5. The headliner according to Claim 1, further comprising a face fabric (18) attached to said layer of material (16).
6. The interior trim panel according to Claim 1, wherein said plurality of impressions (12) and corresponding projections (14) form a two-dimensional array.
7. A method of manufacturing a headliner, comprising the steps of:

compressing both sides of a substrate (10) so as to form a first surface (11), and an opposite, second surface (13) substantially parallel to said first surface (11) forming a thickness of said substrate (10) therebetween, said first surface (11) having a plurality of impressions (12) formed therein along a plane of said first surface (11) so as to create a corresponding number of projections (14) extending outwardly from said second surface (13) substantially perpendicular to said plane of said first surface (11); and

attaching a layer of material (16) to the projections (14) of the substrate (10),

whereby the layer of material (16) together with the projections (14) form an I-beam structure that enhances the strength of the headliner.

8. The method of Claim 7, further comprising the step of attaching a face fabric (18) to the layer of material (16).

9. The method of Claim 7, further comprising the step of arranging the plurality of impressions (12) and corresponding projections (14) so as to have a maximum number per unit area of substrate (10).

10. The method of Claim 7, wherein the plurality of impressions (12) and corresponding projections (14) form a two-dimensional array.

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